

REMARKS

There are now pending in this application Claims 1, 5, and 8-22, of which Claims 1 and 17 are independent. Claims 5 and 6 have been cancelled without prejudice or waiver of their subject matter. No claims have been added.

In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, favorable reconsideration and allowance of the above application is respectfully sought.

Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the Examiner's indication that Claims 7-9 and 12 recite patentable subject matter and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. In response, Applicants have amended independent Claim 1 to incorporate what is understood to be the salient features of Claim 7. Accordingly, Claim 1 now provides that a diameter a of the outer peripheral surface of the rotatable member in a state that the rotatable member is free of deformation, a diameter b of a surface opposed to the outer peripheral surface of the rotatable member of the ring-like member, and $\Delta t = b-a$, satisfy the formula wherein 0.009 is equal to or smaller than $\Delta t/a$ which is equal to or smaller than 0.03. Applicants respectfully submit that all of the salient features of dependent Claim 7, as well as Claim 6 from which Claim 7 depended, have been incorporated into Claim 1. Applicants therefore respectfully submit that independent Claim 1 is now in condition for allowance.

Independent Claim 17 has been further amended to recite that a diameter a of the outer peripheral surface of the rotatable member in a state that the rotatable member is free of deformation, a diameter b of a surface opposed to the outer peripheral surface of the rotatable member of the ring-like member, and $\Delta t = b-a$, satisfy the formula wherein 0.009 is equal to or smaller than $\Delta t/a$ which is equal to or smaller than 0.03.

For reasons noted above with respect to Claim 1, Claim 17 as amended is likewise believed distinguishable over the art of record and in condition for allowance.

The remaining claims in the above-identified application are dependent claims which depend either directly or indirectly from Claims 1 or 17 and are therefore patentable over the art of record for reasons noted above with respect to Claims 1 or 17. In addition, each recite features of the invention still further distinguishing it from the applied art. Favorable and independent consideration thereof is respectfully sought.

Applicants respectfully submit that all outstanding matters in the above application have been addressed and that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the above application are respectfully sought.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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